

**I just can't look it's
killing me**

MaximumAwkward

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Summary:

It is November 1995, Eddie is nineteen years old and he's been desperately in love with Richie Tozier for six years.

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Author's Note:

This is the first thing I've ever published, I'm very nervous. The title is from Mr. Brightside by The Killers, because I'm very original.

It is November 1995, Eddie is nineteen years old and he's been desperately in love with Richie Tozier for six years. Richie and Stan are on a date. Like a real date. They 're dating. Richie and Stan are dating and Eddie is alone. Don't get him wrong, He's happy for his friends, really. And mostly nothing has changed, the trio still hangs out regularly and most of the time, no one would have noticed a difference. Until Richie makes a sex joke, or Stan tries a pickup line, then Eddie finds himself feeling like he's just been plunged into a frozen pool. Cold, unnameable feelings creep through his abdomen. Guilt, envy, even, god forbid, jealousy, mix together in his head and no matter how much he wants them gone, they stay. It was unfair to his friends. He'd had his chance, and he didn't do anything. It's November 1995, Eddie is still in love with Richie Tozier. He sits down in his Tuesday morning lecture right next to Bill, who leans over and says "Stan didn't come home last night." With a suggestive tone and an eyebrow wiggle that sends Eddie running to the bathroom trying not to throw up.

It is December 1995, Eddie is twenty years old, still in love with Richie Tozier and still alone. The crowd in Richie's apartment chants down to the new year. 5- Eddie remembers what people are supposed to do at midnight, 4- Eddie finds his friends paired up and staring in to each other's eyes, 3- Eddie retreats to a back wall, 2- Eddie locks eyes with Stan, who has his arm wrapped tightly around Richie's waist 1- Eddie watches Richie and Stan kiss deeply, while his stomach turns and his heart aches, but he can't bring himself to look away. He feels tears prick in his eyes, and he runs towards the bathroom. He runs into a girl whose name he could care less about, she asks what's wrong and he makes an excuse about too much champagne. He cries silently in the bathroom, though he really couldn't tell you why.

It is February 1996, Eddie is twenty years old, he's in love with Richie Tozier and he's alone on Valentine's Day. This is normal and expected. What's not normal or expected, is the visit from Richie he received two days ago. Richie visiting was normal, Richie visiting without Stan was decreasingly normal, and Richie showing up unannounced while Eddie is fresh out of the shower to ask for advice about Stan this was very unexpected. Eddie threw on some clothes and sat Richie on his beat-up salvation army couch. Richie then asks a question that tore Eddie's heart in two.

"How should I ask Stan to move in with me?" Richie seemed nervous but genuinely excited. So Eddie gave his best advice, and tried not to choke on his words, or let tears be seen in his eyes. It's February 1996, Eddie is twenty years old, he's still in love with Richie Tozier, and Stan and Richie are moving in together. He dutifully moves boxes and hangs pictures, and tries not to look too closely at anything.

It's March 1996 Eddie is twenty years old, he's deeply in love with Richie Tozier and he is the third wheel with his two best friends. The way they look at each other makes his stomach clench. The way they talk about each other makes his head spin. He feels something white hot in his heart, he knows what it is, but he doesn't want to think about it. He feels sick all the time and he doesn't know how much longer he can take it. They can see it in his eyes, they ask about it, he brushes it off and blames it on midterms. They groan about midterms. Then Eddie notices something that makes a part of him wither and die right then and there on Richie and Stan's shared second-hand futon, Stan and Richie are in love. It has been four months and Richie and Stan are in love.

It's April 1996, a Thursday evening, when he meets up with Richie to hang out. The first thing out of Richie's mouth is "Stan told me he loves me." Eddie doesn't even bother to ask if Richie said it back, he knows the answer. He knows how the two feel about each other. They spend most of the night talking about Stan, the exact topic Eddie had wanted to avoid, but he can't bring himself to be mad, Richie seems so happy.

It's May 1996 Eddie is twenty years old, classes end in two weeks, he's still in love with Richie Tozier, and Richie and Stan have just

broken up. Richie is on his couch, he's angry and crying, Eddie doesn't know what the fight was about, he doesn't care. All he can think about is the quiet rage forming in his stomach. He couldn't think of a fight bad enough that anyone would break up with Richie. He doesn't ask, he just holds Richie, who screams and yells and cries loudly into Eddie's shoulder.

It's May 1996, classes end next week, Eddie is quietly in love with Richie Tozier, and this is shaping up to be the most miserable week of his life. Richie is sleeping on Eddie's couch, even though the apartment is in his name, Stan and Richie refuse to be in the same room, and they are both miserable. Eddie is also miserable. He's face to face with his chance to finally tell Richie how he feels, but Richie is so sad and raw, he can't bring himself to say anything.

It's May 1996, classes end on Friday, Eddie is in love with Richie Tozier, and he cannot take it anymore. He convinces Richie to talk to Stan. He needs the three of them to be friends again, he can't spend one more day listening to Richie talk about how much he misses Stan or vice versa. Richie leaves in the afternoon, and Eddie doesn't hear from him until morning. He calls before Eddie's first class and says the exact words Eddie didn't want to hear.

"Stan and I got back together last night." Eddie croaks out a message of congratulations, makes plans to have Richie pick up his things, then skips his lecture to cry, curled up on the couch where Richie had been sleeping.

It's August 1996, Eddie is twenty years old, he officially been in love with Richie Tozier for seven years and Richie and Stan may actually be the death of him. Every time Richie calls Stan "Baby" he feels like his soul withers. Every time they share a meaningful glance, or a casual touch, Eddie wants to scream. He honestly thought he could get over it, but even after eight months, the fact that Richie and Stan are dating still hurts him. Every movie night feels like an invasion of privacy, every dinner an intrusion into their perfectly settled life. Eddie feels like a home wrecker, despite not wrecking anything so far.

It's November 1996, Eddie is twenty years old, he's in love with Richie Tozier, and Richie and Stan have been dating a year. They spend their anniversary weekend in a cabin in the wilds of Maine,

and Eddie spends the weekend moping around his apartment. Bill calls, but Eddie doesn't answer. When asked about it on Monday, Eddie blames food poisoning. He looks so dead, that Bill believes him easily. He spends the afternoon with Stan and Richie and regrets it. They're so in love, and after spending a weekend alone, they're completely engrossed in each other. Eddie feels outside the conversation all night.

It's November 1996, Eddie is twenty-one years old, still very much in love with Richie Tozier, and very nearly lets that slip at his own birthday party, too drunk to even see straight, let alone keep all of these feelings bottled up inside. Instead of the threatened word vomit that would result in the truth finally becoming known, Eddie throws up in his kitchen sink and is poured into bed by Richie and Stan.

It's December 1996, Eddie is twenty-one years old, he's in love with Richie Tozier who is sitting in his living room. They're eating pizza and watching a movie when Richie turns to look Eddie in the eye and says:

"I'm gonna give Stan a promise ring." Eddie chokes on his pizza. When he's done coughing and sputtering he squeaks out:

"Really?" His heart is beating one hundred miles a minute "Yeah, I know we can't get married right now, but maybe someday, and I want him to know that I want that." Eddie is definitely blinking back tears, and the color feels completely drained from his face. Richie notices. "You okay Eds?" maybe it's Richie's soft voice or the old nickname, but something in Eddie snaps.

"I'm in love with you!" He shouts before he can stop himself. Richie retracts with a look of total disbelief on his face.

"I-I should go." He says and sprints out of Eddie's apartment.

"Richie! Wait!" Eddie calls after him, but it's useless, he's already gone."Fuck, fuck, fuck!" Eddie yells to the empty room and begins to cry.

It's January 1997, Eddie is twenty-one years old and he's still in love with Richie Tozier. He didn't see Richie or Stan for the rest of break after his accidental confession. The first time he sees Stan is in their shared economics class, they sit on opposite sides of the room, but even from that far, Eddie can see a Claddagh ring on Stan's left hand. He knows then that he'd truly missed his chance.